

Suiter's death adds to load of unsolved murder cases

At least 17 will be transferred to overstretched force

By **KEVIN RECTOR**
AND **JUSTIN FENTON**
The Baltimore Sun

When Rodney Huey heard Baltimore Police Detective Sean Suiter had been fatally shot in West Baltimore, he immediately thought of his own son's killing.

Nakim Turner, 25, was gunned down in August, and Suiter was the lead detective on the case. Huey and his wife were scheduled to meet with Suiter in a few days to discuss the investigation. Now, the detective was dead, and Huey worried

Inside

Procession to close highways around city today
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the investigation into his son's killing could be, too.

"If he didn't keep good notes, or keep anything written down, how will they know what to do?" Huey wondered. "We don't know what's going on now."

Stacy Robinson feels the same way. Suiter was the lead detective investigating the killing in October of her brother, Antwan Bond, 26, and had been "wonderful" from the start, expressing a genuine desire to solve her brother's case and visiting her at her home to discuss the case, she said. See **SUITER**, page 10



Det. Sean Suiter, who was shot Nov. 15 and died the next day, was the primary investigator for 17 active homicides, all of which must now be transferred to other detectives, police say.

GOP tax bill moves ahead

Senate budget panel sends measure to floor for a vote this week

By **LISA MASCARO**
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — After a flurry of last-minute concessions by President Donald Trump to win over reluctant Republicans, the GOP tax plan cleared a key committee vote Tuesday and appeared better positioned for passage when the full Senate is expected to vote later this week.

Even so, with Republicans' slim 52-seat majority in the Senate, it would take only three of the remaining half-dozen or so GOP holdouts to block the bill, which Republicans hope will be their signature legislative achievement of Trump's first year in office. The Senate bill, which still needs to be reconciled with a House version, remains a work in progress.

Many of the latest changes were aimed at winning support from Sen. Susan Collins, the Maine centrist who helped kill the GOP's repeal of the Affordable Care Act earlier this year.

Dealing directly with Trump at times, including in a private meeting, Collins apparently won concessions on two major fronts, according to those familiar with the negotiations.

Trump vowed to support an Affordable Care Act fix that would continue so-called cost-sharing reduction payments for two years, as long as the tax bill includes a provision that would repeal the Obamacare requirement that all Americans have insurance. The cost-sharing payments help reduce co-payments and deductibles for low-income Americans. See **TAX BILL**, page 7

Inside

Top Democrats drop meeting with Trump
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KARL MERTON FERRON/BALTIMORE SUN

Yon Song combs the hair for her husband of 51 years, Jai Song, inside his room at Lorian Columbia skilled nursing center.

Elderly Koreans find a place to feel at home

Columbia center taps market that grows as population changes

By **ANDREA K. MCDANIELS**
The Baltimore Sun

A woman sat in a wheelchair intently reading a story in a Korean-language newspaper about an earthquake that had ravaged a part of her native land.

Other gray-haired residents at the Lorian Columbia skilled nursing center

clapped their hands as they sang a traditional Korean song about feeling sentimental for one's hometown. Some watched a Korean-language news channel on a flat-screen television.

The elderly men and women live on a wing of the nursing facility that caters to Koreans — a unique, but growing, concept that helped Lorian Health Services tap

into an underserved population.

Lorian opened the specialized unit, which now has 53 beds, four years ago to better reflect the local community.

In Howard County, 16.2 percent of the population is Asian, including 4.2 percent who are Korean, according to 2015 U.S. Census estimates. That's up 33 percent See **HOME**, page 10

TODAY'S WEATHER

SUNNY AND MILD

63 | **34**
HIGH | LOW



Partly cloudy Thursday **SPORTS PG 14**

U.S. House panel convenes in Baltimore over opioid epidemic

By **MEREDITH COHN**
The Baltimore Sun

At a congressional hearing on opioids Tuesday in Baltimore, Republicans, Democrats and health officials agreed on the scope of the problem, but not about who should do what to address it.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee came to Baltimore, where opioids have been a particular scourge, at the behest of Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, its ranking Democrat.

Cummings said heroin and other opioids have become a national "emergency," noting that during the first two hours of the hearing an estimated half-dozen people around the country lost a parent, sibling or child to an overdose. Other U.S. lawmakers, as well as Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh who attended the hearing at Johns Hopkins Hospital, called it a "crisis."

See **OPIOIDS**, page 13

SUMMARY OF THE NEWS

MARYLAND

BUMP STOCK BAN: Top Democrats in the General Assembly want to expand Maryland's assault weapons ban to also forbid the sale of bump stocks, the device used in the Las Vegas mass shooting to turn a semiautomatic rifle into a rapidly firing weapon. **NEWS PG 2**

KUSHNER INVESTORS: The apartment company owned by Jared Kushner, senior adviser and son-in-law of President Donald J. Trump, has asked a federal judge in Maryland to hide the names of the firm's investors to protect them from what it says has been unfair media coverage. **NEWS PG 2**

eNEWSPAPER UPDATE

MISSILE LAUNCH: North Korea launched another intercontinental ballistic missile, the Pentagon said Tuesday, with experts calculating that Washington is technically within Kim Jong Un's reach. The launch, the first in 10 weeks, is a sign that the North Korean leader's regime is pressing ahead with its stated goal of being able to strike the U.S. mainland. **NEWS PG 9**

Suiter's cases must be transferred

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"Even from the day at the hospital when everything first transpired, he came up to me very soft spoken, but powerful in what he was saying. Just direct eye contact. He allowed you to take your time, and he wasn't in a rush," she said.

"We were asking him, 'Would it go to a cold case? What if there's no leads?' And he was like, 'No, there's no such thing as a cold case with me. I get to the bottom of things.'"

Robinson's concern now is that the next detective won't be as caring, and "the ball is going to be dropped," she said.

Suiter, 43, an 18-year veteran, a husband and a father of five, was shot Nov. 15 while investigating another killing in West Baltimore. He died the next day.

His funeral is today.

According to police, Suiter was the primary investigator for 17 active homicides stretching back two years, all of which must now be transferred to other detectives. That's not including other homicide and shooting cases in which suspects have been arrested and Suiter was expected to testify.

T.J. Smith, a police spokesman, said the homicide section "works in teams," and its detectives "will assume the cases and the victim families will be notified of the new investigator."

Smith said the new investigators will have "all available notes" from Suiter.

"There is no doubt that a sudden loss like this can present some challenges," Smith said.

But he said the department's detectives "are skilled at assuming a case that once was investigated primarily by someone else," given their experiences with colleagues who retired or were reassigned.

Melba Saunders, a spokeswoman for Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn J. Mosby, said prosecutors have been "thoroughly assessing any effect [Suiter's] untimely death will have on open and pending cases."

"Should there be any concerns that impact public safety, we will take the appropriate action to notify the public," Saunders said.

Huey said his wife called police in the days after Suiter was killed to ask who the new lead detective on their son's case would be. She was told "everything was just too fresh" to discuss Suiter's replacement. He said they have heard nothing from police since then.

With so many killings this year — 316 through Tuesday — homicide investigators were already stretched thin with heavy case loads.

They are now dealing with all of Suiter's cases as well.

In addition to Turner's case, a double shooting in which 27-year-old Vaughn Riley also was killed, Suiter was working as the

lead investigator in at least 13 other cases from late 2015 onward.

On the day Suiter was shot in the 900 block of Bennett Place, he was following up on a triple fatal shooting last year in the same block, in which police said three members of the Black Guerrilla Family gang were killed in a boarded-up home that the gang used as a hangout.

Suiter also was working the August 2016 homicide of Franswhaun Smith, 42, who was killed about two blocks away.

Suiter had two active cases from December 2015, including the killing of 18-year-old Daquan Johnson, who was found fatally shot in a vacant building in Curtis Bay. He was also investigating the killing of 31-year-old George Cookson, who was also found dead from gunshot wounds in a Curtis Bay vacant in January 2017.

Detective Jonathan Jones, who considered himself Suiter's partner but was not with him on the day he was shot, said Suiter's death has "taken its toll" in a unit where detectives sometimes work around the clock investigating death.

"I'm doing everything I can just to throw myself back into work so I can try to just work through it," Jones said Tuesday.

"As tough as it is, there's still families that need closure. There's still killers out there that need to be caught. It would do Suiter a disservice for us not to do everything we

can to find these people."

Though a squad of homicide detectives from the unit is investigating Suiter's death, Jones and others who were close to him have been asked to wall themselves off from the case.

Jones said families of victims whose deaths Suiter investigated have been calling him over the past week, passing along their condolences.

He said "it was because of how caring and loving he was toward them in their time of need."

Suiter worked in various roles throughout his 18-year career, rising from drug cases to shootings and robberies to the homicide unit in 2015. Jones said Suiter was a determined investigator. "He was pushing it, pushing it extra to close cases," he said. "He wasn't happy when cases were open."

Suiter's own case remained unsolved Tuesday despite the large-scale investigation underway by police and federal partners and a massive \$215,000 reward for information leading to an arrest.

Smith, the police spokesman, said Tuesday on the C4 Show on WBAL radio that "all of the circumstances that would help us find out who a suspect is haven't been revealed. That's something we're working towards."

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Home makes elderly Koreans feel comfortable

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since 2010, when Asians made up 13.3 percent of the population. Dispersed throughout the county are Korean enclaves, including in Columbia and Ellicott City. The state's Department of Transportation earlier this year named a five-mile stretch of U.S. 40 "Korean Way" because of the heavy concentration of Korean businesses along the corridor.

"I think the wing is a good reflection of the community and it serves a need," said Eric Grimm, the nursing home's administrator.

Those who live on the wing are immersed in Korean culture. A Korean chef cooks staples unique to the country, like kimchi, a spicy fermented cabbage dish, or bulgogi, a marinated beef or pork dish prepared on a grill. Korean pastors come in and host religious ceremonies. Residents play traditional Korean games such as Yoot, a board game played around the Korean New Year, where wooden sticks are used like dice. Little English is heard on the floor.

While there are religion-based retirement communities — think Catholic or Lutheran homes — nursing care is often less culturally focused. But more facilities are adapting to the nation's growing ethnic diversity, hiring multilingual staff, serving multi-ethnic foods and in some cases devoting whole floors to one culture.

The focus on culture and ethnicity is an example of the way nursing homes are looking at innovative ways to better serve the communities where they are located, those in the nursing home industry said.

"It is very important for nursing homes to innovate with regards to diversity and inclusion, not just because it is what is expected by patients and family, but also because it is what is necessary in regards to a demographically changing America," said Joseph DeMattos Jr., president and CEO of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland, which represents the state's nursing homes.

New federal guidelines require nursing

homes to pay more attention to the ethnic, religious and cultural background of their clientele. Being culturally inclusive helps improve the quality of life of seniors who already may feel vulnerable and socially isolated after moving out of their homes, said Janine Finck-Boyle, director of health regulations and policy for LeadingAge, which represents nonprofit nursing homes and providers that serve seniors.

"You are going to take care of their medical care," Finck-Boyle said. "You are going to make sure you take care of their disease process and that they have a shower or bath. But you need those other things that contribute to their quality of life."

Many of the nursing homes doing this are located in areas, often big cities, where there are pockets of ethnic communities, said Dr. David Gifford, senior vice president of quality and regulatory affairs for the American Health Care Association. Gifford recently visited a nursing home in Brooklyn with a floor that catered to Chinese patients. All the signage was in Mandarin and the staff also spoke the language. A chef cooked traditional food from the region.

In Baltimore, Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital has catered to the Jewish population for 125 years, even though 50 percent of its population is not Jewish. The medical facility has a kosher kitchen and a synagogue where a weekly Sabbath service is held. All the major Jewish holidays are celebrated.

"You want to meet the needs of the population you care for," Gifford said. "If you are in an area that has a large ethnic group, you better figure out how to care for them."

Yon Song moved her 81-year-old husband, Jai Song, onto the Korean wing at Lorien eight months ago after he had back surgery. She said she thought he would be more comfortable around other Koreans and in a place that served Korean food. Jai Song agreed.

"I very much like living here," he said.

Sue Song gave Lorien the idea for the Korean wing while she was president of the Korean American Community Association in Howard County. When she came to the United States in the 1980s, she noticed many Koreans weren't assimilating into American culture. Over the years, she helped some of them navigate their new world and, as they aged, she saw a new need for nursing home services.

She first helped establish a phone service with Lorien that connected elderly Korean-Americans and their families with culturally sensitive long-term care resources in the area.

Yet Grimm and the rest of the management at Lorien Health Services, an Ellicott City-based firm that owns the Columbia nursing facility and nine others across the region, weren't completely sold at first on the idea of a Korean wing.

"Everybody wants to talk about diversity, but they don't want to think outside of the box," Song said.

And indeed, the management at Lorien thought Song's idea was innovative, but risky.

"We knew how to take care of the clinical needs, but not the cultural component that helps make a person healthy," said Lorien Health CEO Lou Grimm Sr. "When we started talking about a unit, it was a little scary."

Instead, Lorien started with five beds in 2013 and encountered some stumbling blocks. For one, Song didn't know the Korean menu needed to meet certain nutritional guidelines to be approved by state health officials. At first, she brought her rice cooker from home, when state rules required a commercial cooker.

The staff also had to learn to contend with cultural differences. A couple of years after the wing was opened, they noticed the rate of falls was high.

It turned out that many of the residents with dementia were getting out of bed and sleeping on the floor, because they slept that way in Korea.

Michele Haile, a Lorien social worker,

said she has to think about cultural differences when working with Korean residents and families. For instance, it is the spouse or children who under Maryland law are typically the lead surrogate that makes decisions on behalf of a patient. In Korean culture, it is the oldest male child who makes the decisions and Haile has made sure advance directives reflect that.

"I have to make sure I am getting documents that are compliant with Maryland law, but respectful of Korean culture," she said.

Other obstacles also can arise when catering to a particular ethnic group. Nursing homes have to make sure they have enough patients to justify the investment, Gifford said. And finding staff that understands the culture and is trusted by the community can be hard.

Today the Korean unit has a waiting list and Lou Grimm said they are looking to expand it. Lorien officials said they also have been approached about creating a wing aimed at people from India, that they are considering.

Lou Grimm credits a staff, including Song, who knows the Korean culture well and speaks the language.

"That is key," he said. "You have to have someone who is in touch with the culture and the families."

Kim Hyea's face lights up when she is asked about living on the Korean wing while reading the newspaper one afternoon.

Dressed in a pink sweater with a blanket across her lap, she said she most likes the food. But she also likes living among so many other Koreans and that the staff is attentive to her medical needs. The 82-year-old, retired from government work, said she never wants to leave.

"This is heaven," Hyea said through a translator. "This is paradise. I want to die here."

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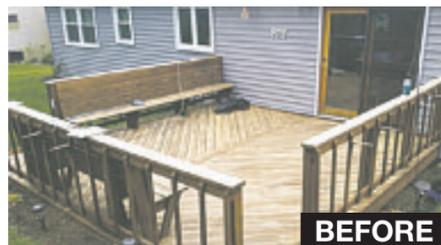
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